

THE BALTIMORE SUN  
31 January 1976

## *Bush, with a politician's smile, contrasts Colby, with ice-gray eyes*

*Washington Bureau of The Sun*

Washington—George Bush, who loves the political limelight, took over yesterday the job of William Egan Colby, who chose to live in the shadows.

In the surrealistically decorated, orange-and-white auditorium of the Central Intelligence Agency at Langley, Va., Mr. Colby, a slender, soft-voiced man with eyes like gray ice, turned over the reins of espionage power to Mr. Bush, a tall, Texas millionaire with the practiced smile of the professional politician.

Behind Mr. Colby were 25 years in the intelligence business, not counting his World War II days in the Office of Strategic Services, when he parachuted into occupied territory to sabotage German operations.

In the CIA, where his duties took him to Europe and Asia, Mr. Colby's reputation became that of a superspy, the man in charge of the department of dirty tricks. His was the netherworld of clandestine operations, and the most severe criticism directed at him was for his handling of Operation Phoenix, a program aimed at neutralizing the Viet Cong infrastructure in South Vietnam.

Mr. Colby was later to concede there were abuses—al-

legedly including imprisonment, torture and murder—in executing that project. A few years later, as CIA chief, he was to concede the agency had erred, its errors ranging from collecting files on Americans to administering hallucinogenic drugs to unsuspecting victims.

The Colby tenure at the CIA was unquestionably the most bizarre in the agency's history in that the director spent most of the past year under fire on Capitol Hill as Congress plunged into a belated investigation of alleged intelligence excesses.

Mr. Colby's voice never rose, his expression never altered during the intensive interrogations and the courtesy of his response never betrayed his thinking. Some said he was an apparatchik, but most said the director was professional in the intelligence business.

President Ford dismissed Mr. Colby clumsily and was forced to ask him to stay on until Mr. Bush was confirmed by the Senate, an action that at times appeared to be in doubt. Mr. Bush's political qualifications were excellent and that was what troubled many senators.

A former congressman, ex-chairman of the Republican National Committee, onetime ambassador to the United Na-

tions and then ambassador to China, Mr. Bush was viewed as a man of many talents. The problem was whether any of them made him an appropriate choice to run a huge, secret agency quivering from the sting of public criticism.

Mr. Ford had to publicly remove Mr. Bush as a possible candidate for the vice presidential nomination to mollify the voices of discontent on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Bush takes over the directorship at a time when CIA reforms are being legislated and the furor over the alleged wickedness of spies may be dwindling in volume. His only previous experience in defending a group under siege was during his GOP National Committee leadership during the Watergate scandal. Yet his approach, being more familiar, may be less discomfiting to Congress.

And Mr. Colby will return to the less-sinister shadows of retirement, law practice and writing a book about the new intelligence.

The final gesture from government to its top spy was to give him the National Security Medal. Perhaps that was appropriate. That award used to be known as the invisible medal, because even its possession was supposed to be a secret.